

# NEWTON YOUTH COMMISSION Meeting

**October 6, 2010 MINUTES**

**Location: Newton City Hall Cafeteria**

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Present: Joe De Vito (Chair), Heather Byrns, Chris Fortunato, Donna Gordon, Matt Green, Peter Harrington, Officer Jeff Mace, Ellen Manning, Stephanie Pelkowsky, Stephan Ross, Terance Sack, John Staulo, , Students: Tamara Matama (NNHS), Gabriella Pulcini (NNHS)

Regrets: Anthony Bibbo, Richard Dyer, Kristen Tuohy, Students: Kyle Olson and Adam Sangiolo

Staff: Ruth Hoshino, School Nurse Leader, Human and Volunteer Services

Guests: Patricia McAuley (BC School of Social Work), Laura Regan (BC School of Social Work), Miriam Williams (BC School of Social Work), Amanda (BC School of Social Work),

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The meeting was opened at 7:05 PM and chaired by Joe De Vito.

Introductions were made and the agenda was reviewed.

A motion to accept the minutes of June 22, 2009 was made by Stephanie and seconded by Bob. The motion to accept the minutes passed.

**Treasurer's report:** The budget for FY 2010 operating budget is \$2500. No new activity.

## **New or Old Business**

- Mayor's Public Service Internship Program: Chris and Ellen are collecting applications from North and South high school students with additional recruitment from houses of worship. September was off to a slow start as school was just getting back into session. But, October has seen an increase in interest. By late Oct/early Nov. there will be 8-10 students (with a minimum of 6) involved. Teens will meet weekly and decide how to drive the program. They will have direct access to the mayor 2-3 times per year. They would also plan and carry out a teen driven community event. The students will develop a budget and request funding from the Youth Comm. They will request funding for meeting snacks and to help with the event that they plan. They will most likely do fund raising as well. The interns will be meeting at the teen centers. Youth Comm. members are invited to attend a meeting. The meeting schedule will be distributed. A question from Tamara was whether students who currently serve on the Youth Commission could also be part of the internship program. Answer is yes.
- Managing Requests for Presentation of Information to Commission: Joe asked how the group would like to decide on who comes before the commission to present information. Matt said that historically the chair makes the decision. Joe's inclination id to discuss it with the group ahead of time unless it is time sensitive. Ellen feels that as long as it is on the agenda, it would be fine. Peter said that as chair, he would get the word out to the group quickly for sudden matters and have a discussion at the meeting if it was more informational. The group felt that matters of public relations and access to public facilities were fine, personal interests would not be entertained. Joe said that as requests come in, he will present them to the comm. To consider and give everyone the opportunity to weigh in. The meetings are open and so anyone can attend. However, they may not have a chance to present.

- Restorative Justice: Donna reported that the group is working with Judge King. They plan to meet with Ted Cotter (Clerk Magistrate) and the Diversion Program from the Attorney General's office. This fall, there will be evening trainings at city hall. Donna will send email updates as progress is made. Tamara asked if it is still open to students – answer, yes. No cases so far this year.
- Discussion about prescription drug abuse and youth: Chris posed question to students in the group about recent news report of Newton students being involved in drug related murder. Tamara explained that students have been told not to speak about the crime as it is under investigation. Counselors have been available to students. Chris spoke of an explosion in the abuse of prescription drugs and the drastic behavior changes that can occur. Ellen asked if house break-ins are related to targeting homes where drugs are known to be. Jeff did not have data but anecdotally reports an increase in kids abusing prescription drugs. Matt reports 10 years of noted increase in abuse. Ellen reports conversation at teen center about recent drug related murder. Rich spoke about efforts with the Crime Commission to have Newton raise fines for marijuana possession. Currently \$100, would like to see it higher in keeping with what other communities have done. Joe thanked the group for working with kids to keep them on the right track.

### **Announcements**

Stephanie – Parks and Rec Dept is looking for volunteers to help citizens in need with snow shoveling. Interested people would go on a master list that will be distributed to people in need. There will be a direct contact with an agreement about payment vs voluntary. If snow shoveling law is passed in Newton, more people may be looking for assistance with sidewalk shoveling. This work would be considered community service. No specific age requirement but youth would need parental permission. Tamara suggested posting on Naviance website. Ruth will email the flyer to the group.

A second flyer will be sent about the “Scarecrow Walk” at Nahantan Park.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.  
The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 PM.

**The next meeting** will be Wednesday, November 3 at 7 PM

Respectfully submitted by Ruth Hoshino